

REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are pending in the application. In the Office Action of February 13, 2006, claims 27-44 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1-26 were rejected. Applicants hereby amend claims 1-3 and 10 and traverse the rejections. In view of the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants request reconsideration of this application.

Interview Summary

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner and her colleagues for their time in conducting the interview on May 16, 2006. During that interview, the operation and general features of the subject travel planning, booking and calendaring system were demonstrated. The participants discussed claims 1 and 2, including claim interpretation and claim language. The participants also discussed Jones, et al. (U.S. 2002/0156661), Tagawa (U.S. 5,532,398) and Gabos (U.S. 2004/0162829), and the Examiner referred Applicants to Vance (U.S. 6,442,546) and Lynch (U.S. 6,018,715) for further consideration. In addition, the Examiner noted an i-tinerary reference, and Applicants indicated that the pending application was previously owned by i-tinerary Travel Solutions, Inc. The participants discussed Applicants' argument that none of the cited references teach or suggest a system that is programmed to "receive a travel request input including travel request data automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application" as recited in Applicants' claims. This argument is presented in more detail below. Agreement with respect to the claims was not reached during the interview.

Response to Objection

The Examiner has objected to the abstract as being too long. Applicants have amended the abstract by replacing it with a new abstract of 150 words or less.

Response to Claim Rejections

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 on the grounds that the phrase "the travel distribution system" lacks antecedent basis. Applicants have amended claim 5 to address this rejection. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment is not a narrowing amendment.

Claims 1-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Jones, et al. (U.S. 2002/0156661) in view of Tagawa (5,532,398). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to clarify that the recited travel request data is automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application and that the user's personal calendar application is configured to store and display a user's personal calendar events, including events not related to the travel request data.

Jones, et al. is directed to a system for processing travel requests based on a user's travel destination goal. In the Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Jones, et al. does not disclose a method and system wherein the travel request input includes travel request data automatically gathered from a user's calendar and that Jones does not disclose a method and system that automatically creates and stores events in the appointment calendar using data from the user's confirmed travel itinerary. The Examiner concludes, however, that Tagawa teaches these features. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Tagawa is directed to a self-service system for selling travel-related services that utilizes kiosks that display a calendar interface for the user to input dates for various travel-related services. The Examiner notes that Tagawa recognizes that inviting the user to enter dates for travel-related services by means of a calendar is a particularly effective tool to assist the user in selecting the desired travel related service or product. Tagawa, however, simply presents a public kiosk calendar interface by which the user can enter dates manually for desired travel-related services. In Tagawa, this calendar interface is not the user's personal calendar application. The Tagawa reservation system does not teach or suggest using a personal calendar application that can store and display all of a user's personal calendar events, including those not related to the travel services being purchased. Instead, Tagawa discloses only a system that is dedicated to displaying reservation dates for the travel services being purchased. Moreover, nothing in Tagawa teaches or suggests a system that automatically creates and stores appointment events in the user's personal calendar application, as does Applicants' invention. Indeed, nothing in Tagawa teaches or suggests any system communication at all with the user's personal calendar application, as does Applicants' invention.

Thus, Jones, et al. and Tagawa, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a system having the recited features of claims 1 and 2. Applicants respectfully suggest, therefore, that claims 1 and 2 are patentable over Jones et al. and Tagawa.

Claim 3 is directed to a system for automatically planning, booking and calendaring travel arrangements. The system includes a data storage device, an output device and a processor. The processor is programmed to: maintain in the storage device a database of user profile information including information regarding travel booking preferences; receive a travel request input including travel request data gathered from a user's personal calendar application; use the stored user profile information and the travel request data to automatically formulate a travel request in response to the travel request input, the travel request including reservation information; automatically create a travel query file by applying business rules to the travel request; and submit the query file to a booking engine for creating a travel request query.

Jones et al. and Tagawa do not teach or suggest the features of claim 3. Claim 3 has been amended to clarify that the recited travel request data is automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application and that the user's personal calendar application is configured to store and display a user's calendar events including events not related to the travel request data. As discussed above, Jones et al. and Tagawa do not teach or suggest these features. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 is therefore patentable over Jones et al. and Tagawa.

Claims 4-9 depend from and include all of the features of claim 3. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3, therefore, Applicants also respectfully submit that the proposed combination of Jones et al. and Tagawa does not teach or suggest all of the features of claims 4-9 and that those claims are therefore patentable over Jones et al. and Tagawa.

Claim 10 is directed to a method for automatically planning, booking and calendaring travel arrangements. The method includes: maintaining in a computer storage device a database of user profile information including travel booking preference information; receiving a travel request input including travel request data gathered from a user's personal calendar application; using the stored user profile information and the travel request data to automatically formulate a travel request in response to the travel request input; automatically creating a travel query file by applying business rules to the travel request; receiving from the travel distribution system the air, car and hotel availability information and creating a suggested travel itinerary; and outputting for

display on a user display device the suggested travel itinerary. Creating the travel query request includes: automatically executing a travel booking process; submitting the query file to a booking engine for creating a travel request query; and submitting the travel request query to a travel distribution system for retrieving air, car and hotel availability information.

Jones et al. and Tagawa do not teach or suggest the features of claim 10. Claim 10 has been amended to clarify that the recited travel request data is automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application and that the user's personal calendar application is configured to store and display a user's calendar events including events not related to the travel request data. At the very least, as discussed above, Jones et al. and Tagawa do not teach or suggest these features. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 is therefore patentable over Jones et al. and Tagawa.

Claims 11-26 depend from and include all of the features of claim 10. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 10, therefore, Applicants also respectfully submit that the proposed combination of Jones et al. and Tagawa does not teach or suggest all of the features of claims 11-26 and that those claims are therefore patentable over Jones et al. and Tagawa.

Claims 1-26 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Jones, et al. (U.S. 2002/0156661) in view of Tagawa (5,532,398) and further in view of Gabos (2004/0162829). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Jones, et al., Tagawa and Gabos, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a system having the recited features of claims 1-26.

In making this rejection, the Examiner appears to recognize that Tagawa does not disclose that the calendar interface is the user's personal calendar. *See* Office Action at page 10. The Examiner concludes, however, that Gabos discloses such an interface and that it would have been obvious to combine Jones, Tagawa and Gabos to achieve Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Gabos is directed to a computing system for managing information between a server computing system 106 and a remote computing platform 104, such as a portable, palm-, or hand-held computer. The server computing system can distribute or transfer information stored on the server database 108 to the remote computing platform 104 [0033]. Specifically, a server

application 506 is configured to distribute information, including calendar events, to a staging database and content database resident on the remote computing platform [0056]. Gabos discloses that, in one embodiment, the system can be used by a travel industry company that creates reservations for a client and thus has an itinerary for that client. The itinerary is delivered to the hand-held computer and is automatically written into the calendar application on the hand-held computer [0111].

Although Gabos suggests writing an itinerary to a calendar application on the user's computer, Gabos does not teach or suggest a system that receives travel request data automatically extracted from the calendar application. To the contrary, Gabos discloses that a separate reservation request form must be completed by the user on the remote computing platform, and that the request form can then be sent to the server for further processing or that the request can be transmitted to a service desk for manual processing [0112]. Thus, Gabos teaches away from the system of Applicants' invention, which includes a feature for receiving a travel request input comprising travel request data automatically gathered from the user's personal calendar application.

Gabos therefore does not teach or suggest a processor programmed to "receive a travel request input including travel request data automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application" as recited in each of Applicants' claims 1 and 3-9. Similarly, Gabos does not teach or suggest a method including "receiving a travel request input including travel request data automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application configured to store and display a user's calendar events including events not related to the travel request data" as recited in Applicants' claims 2 and 10-26. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claims 1-26 are patentable over the combination of Jones et al., Tagawa and Gabos.

Claims 1-26 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Jones, et al. (U.S. 2002/0156661) in view of Gabos (2004/0162829). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. For the reasons discussed above, Jones, et al. and Gabos, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a system having the recited features of claims 1-26.

Finally, as suggested at the interview, Applicants have reviewed Vance (U.S. 6,442,526) and Lynch (U.S. 6,018,715). Neither of these references teaches or suggests a system or method having the features of Applicants' claimed invention. Vance discloses a system for processing

travel data and travel receipts that communicates with a credit card provider and a travel planner to match travel plans to credit card receipts. While Vance discloses a calendar user interface 376 for displaying to a user workstation 12 flight, hotel and car information stored on a server, Vance does not disclose or suggest that the calendar interface communicates with a user's personal calendar application configured to store and display a user's calendar events including events not related to the travel request data. Lynch discloses an automated travel planning system that stores information related to an individual traveler, including preference information, and uses that information to determine a travel plan that is satisfactory to the customer. Lynch does not disclose a calendar application. Thus, neither Vance nor Lynch discloses or suggests receiving a travel request input including travel request data automatically gathered from a user's personal calendar application, as recited Applicants' claims. Moreover, neither Vance nor Lynch discloses or suggests processing data from the confirmed travel itinerary for automatically creating and storing appointment events in a user's personal calendar application, as recited in Applicants' claims.

Conclusion

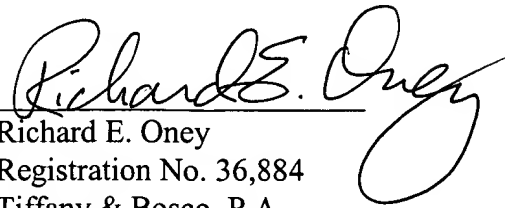
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal

Amendment and Response to Office Action
US Patent Application No. 09/836,141

communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

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Respectfully submitted,


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Louis A. Loftis, Paralegal

8-14-06
Date of Signature